

## Memorandum

Date: August 6, 1998

To: CALFED Policy Group

From: Lester A. Snow  
Executive Director

*Extended  
for 10/1/98*

Subject: Comments on the EIS/R

### Summary

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program received 1,836 individual public comment letters which included 469 speakers at 17 public hearings. Thousands of post cards, form letters and letter writing campaign letters were also received. The public comment letters have been reviewed, logged into a database by comment type, and distributed to CALFED staff for response. Draft responses are being prepared and will be compiled and presented in a Response to Comment document.

The top 5 public issues have been identified as:

- Conservation
- New Facilities
- Agricultural Issues
- Area of Origin/ Water Rights
- Finance/ Beneficiary Pays

### Detailed Discussion

Conservation and storage received the largest volume of comments. The comments associated with these two topics were generally linked, with those who believe conservation is the answer being opposed to new facilities, and those who believe increased conservation still will not solve the problem being in support of new facilities.

Conservation. There were many comments which:

- Indicated conservation was, or was not the solution to the Bay-Delta problems
- Identified deficiencies in the Water Use Efficiency Program
- Challenged the assumptions and conclusions about the amount of water that could be conserved

#### CALFED Agencies

**California**  
The Resources Agency  
Department of Fish and Game  
Department of Water Resources  
California Environmental Protection Agency  
State Water Resources Control Board

**Federal**  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Department of the Interior  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Bureau of Reclamation  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**Department of Agriculture**  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Department of Commerce  
National Marine Fisheries Service

- Indicated there was an over reliance on conservation and water transfers to meet water supply needs
- Asked questions or indicated a preference regarding how the WUE program would be implemented.

New Facilities. There were many comments which:

- Supported or opposed new storage or conveyance facilities.
- Opposed enlargement of Shasta
- Indicated re-operation of existing facilities could solve problems
- Expressed concern over impacts to groundwater as a result of groundwater storage and conjunctive use

Agricultural Issues. There were many comments which:

- Opposed the conversion of agricultural lands for project purposes
- Questioned the benefits to agriculture
- Indicated that Program actions would result in significant redirected impacts to agriculture
- Expressed concern over third party and indirect impacts to agricultural communities, infrastructure and economies
- Indicated that proposed mitigation strategies were inadequate to offset significant adverse impacts to agriculture

Area of Origin/ Water Rights. There were many comments which:

- Indicated CALFED must strengthen water rights.
- CALFED must assure water rights holders that both their surface and groundwater rights will be protected.
- Area of origin water supplies and water users must be assured that water is available for their needs

Finance/ Beneficiary Pays. There were many comments which:

- Indicated the costs of the CALFED program must be apportioned in a manner mutually agreeable to all interests
- Expressed an opinion as to what a fair distribution of costs would be
- Questioned the validity of the economic analysis particularly for agricultural economics
- Questioned the use of public funds for ecosystem restoration and watershed management activities

**Action:** Information Item